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The President's Daily Brief

December 19, 1975

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~~*Top Secret*~~

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USSR-ANGOLA

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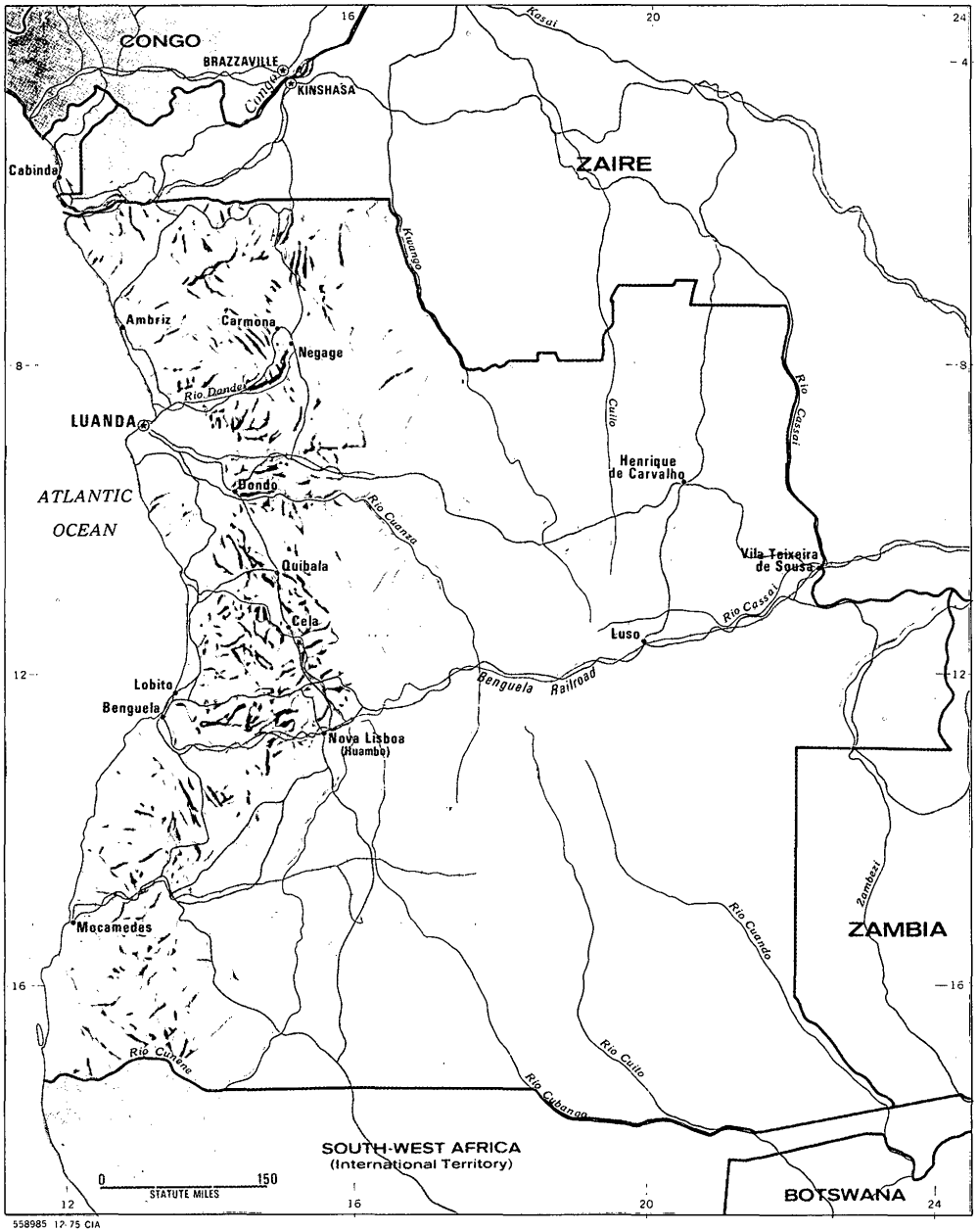

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ANGOLA

The fighting has picked up over the past few days, with the two sides trading gains in different areas.

The combined National Union - National Front force that captured Cela from the Popular Movement late last week has moved to within ten miles of Quibala [redacted] A second National Union force, approaching Quibala from the east, reportedly is within 14 miles of the town. 25X1

The capture of Quibala would put the allied forces in a position to move along a major highway toward Dondo, the Popular Movement's only major base protecting Luanda in this sector. The hydroelectric plant that provides power to the capital is located near Dondo.

In eastern Angola, [redacted] National Union forces are now moving north from Luso toward Henrique de Carvalho, the Popular Movement's base in the east. [redacted] Movement forces were forming a defense line along a river after blowing up a number of bridges in the area. 25X1 25X1

In northern Angola, a 300-man Popular Movement force reportedly has advanced to within 60 miles of the National Front's base at Negage. So far, however, the force apparently has not succeeded in breaking through the Front's outer defenses southeast of the city. The ultimate goal of the force is Carmona, the second most important National Front base, after Ambriz on the coast.

[redacted] 25X1 25X1

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Publicly, Savimbi has recently attempted to disown Pretoria's assistance by claiming that any South African forces are in Angola on their own and by calling on African states to help drive them out. His argument is not likely to be persuasive in many African capitals.

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LEBANON

Armed clashes in the Beirut suburbs and the Tripoli-Zagharta area threaten to draw the large Christian and Muslim militias into another round of sustained fighting.

Lebanese security forces have failed to contain clashes southeast of the capital involving Christians allied with Interior Minister Shamun and Muslims allied with Kamal Jumblatt's Progressive Socialist Party. Fighting between Muslim and Christian factions in Tripoli yesterday reportedly involved tanks and armored vehicles taken from the Lebanese security forces.

Although the cease-fire is still holding in the central part of Beirut and in the hotel district, tensions elsewhere could prompt Christian Phalangists and radical leftists headed by Ibrahim Qulaylat to resume their battle for control of the seafront area. The two sides turned over their respective strongholds to the security forces earlier this week in accordance with provisions of the cease-fire. Nevertheless, they are still in the area and could easily retake their positions.

President Franjiyah's denunciation of the Palestinians [redacted] almost certainly has contributed to rising tensions. Franjiyah accused the Palestinians of breaking their agreement to stay out of Lebanon's internal politics and favoring "one side over another." Franjiyah's Zaghartan Liberation Army is involved in the fighting near Tripoli. 25X1

[redacted] 25X1
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The deteriorating situation in Beirut has prompted a call from Arab League Secretary General Mahmud Riyad for another special conference on Lebanon. An earlier Arab League meeting hastily convened in October was boycotted by Syrian and Palestinian representatives. This latest call appears to be sponsored by Egypt.

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THAILAND

Foreign Minister Chatchai's trip to the US last month seems to have helped put Thai-US relations back on an even keel. [redacted] 25X1

[redacted] 25X1

Prime Minister Khukrit seems equally pleased with the outcome of the talks. [redacted] 25X1

[redacted] The 25X1

Thai reportedly have been pleased with what they believe is a generous military assistance package, even though no specific amounts were discussed. 25X1

Encouraged by the results of his talks in Washington and perhaps impressed by Peking's warning of aggressive Vietnamese designs on Thailand, Chatchai now seems to have adopted a tougher position toward Hanoi. [redacted] 25X1

[redacted] 25X1

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PORTUGAL - WEST GERMANY

Chancellor Schmidt told newsmen on Wednesday that the West Germans were contemplating extending credit to Portugal in order to help Lisbon resolve an impending liquidity crisis.

The announcement followed Schmidt's discussions with Portuguese Socialist Party head Soares, who is on a week-long tour of European capitals to explain recent developments in Portugal. Soares' mission is partisan rather than official, but any aid commitments he can produce will enhance the Socialists' popularity in legislative election promised for next spring.

Soares has emphasized in his talks with foreign leaders that the political situation in Portugal is stabilizing but that the country urgently needs economic assistance. Portugal's foreign exchange reserves are expected to run out early next year. The nation's gold reserves, valued at about $4 billion at the present rate, were expected to forestall the crisis, but government efforts to sell or borrow against the gold have been unsatisfactory. This has resulted in large part from the gold market's current instability and the reluctance of bankers to deal in large quantities of gold.

* * *

While the cabinet is concentrating on the economy, military leaders have turned their attention to renegotiating an agreement with the major political parties over the division of government responsibility between military officers and civilian politicians. The armed forces presented a draft agreement to the parties on Wednesday, and the parties have until December 30 to submit their responses and proposals for a new pact. After the beginning of the year, a five-man delegation from the all-military Revolutionary Council will discuss the proposals with each party and draw up a final document.

The five-man delegation is weighted in favor of the faction of military officers who have agreed to reduce the military role in national political life but do not want to withdraw from the government altogether.

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NOTES

Soviet propagandists have reacted in predictably negative fashion to your announcement of a new Pacific Doctrine.

An extensive broadcast and an article in *Pravda* on December 16 attacked the doctrine as a proposition inconsistent with detente. A comment in *Izvestia* was hard on both the US and China, the US for allegedly seeking yet another formula to justify maintaining a large military presence in Asia, and China for allegedly going along with Washington. In reality, while the Soviets hope that the US will eventually withdraw militarily from Asia, they probably regard our military forces there as a brake on possible Chinese and North Korean adventurism and as a deterrent to closer Chinese-US relations.

* * *

Anti-regime disturbances apparently involving dissident members of the military and police have broken out again in Lourenco Marques, the capital of Mozambique, for the second day in a row. Information on the disorders is sketchy, but at one time Thursday, loyal forces appeared to have restored order.

According to a South African press report, the dissidents are reacting against a crackdown ordered last weekend by President Samora Machel on corruption and political agitation in the police and the army. Although there have been no previous signs of significant opposition to the government from within the military or police, some discontent with the regime's tight control over society and with the declining economy has surfaced since Mozambique became independent last June.

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